

# Mayor and/or City Council 2021

Response ID:88 Data

## 1. Candidate Information

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### 1. Candidate Name

Jacob Laha

### 2. Candidate for Ward # (if applicable)

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### 3. Address

Street Address/Apt/Suite : 5023 Farley St

City/State/Zip : Merriam

### 4. Phone Number

### 5. Email Address

jacob4merriam@gmail.com

### 6. Campaign Website

## 2. Candidate Background

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### 7. Occupation/Work History (last 5 years - 25 words or less)

Architect

### 8. If you are or have been affiliated with a chamber of commerce or other business organization, please list which organization(s) and any leadership positions you have held.

### 9. Other recent political/community experience (50 words or less)

Merriam Comprehensive (2040) Plan Advisory Committee [2019-2021]

5701 Merriam Drive Steering Committee [2019]

Johnson County Brewing Society Director [2021]

Downtown Merriam Project [2021]

## 3. Issues and Policy

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### 10. As a candidate, what are your top three policy issues? (100 words or less)

Community Improvement

Access to Services

Encouraging Development

### 11. What are your views on the services and value the City's citizens receive for their local tax dollars? (100 words or less)

I think citizens receive a good services for what they spend in taxes. My goal is to make sure we get the best services for the best value.

### 12. What changes, if any, would you like to see to the City budget? (100 words or less)

Unsure what I would change at this time.

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**13. What role, if any, do you believe the City should play in economic development to bring jobs and capital investment to the community? (100 words or less)**

The city should do what it can to encourage economic development through improvements to city infrastructure and services to encourage development. The city should be very careful about giving economic incentive to businesses. The city should not be a road block to development and should make it as accessible to as many as possible.

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**14. As the City considers future development and redevelopment projects, describe your views on how the City should best manage and balance growth? (100 words or less)**

The city should be looking to the future. We need to be planning as far out as possible because it will create growth not only in the short term, but set us up to better use resources in the long term, especially if we aren't fixing the mistakes of short term thinking.

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**15. What is your philosophy on the role the City should play in terms of metro-area issues? (100 words or less)**

Each city in the greater metro-area should have a seat at the table to discuss the larger community impacts. While our local city has it's own needs and concerns, we are all part of a larger community too that involves all of us.

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**16. What do you believe the takeaways for the City should be, if any, from the COVID-19 pandemic experience? (100 words or less)**

Flexibility has been the key takeaway form Covid-19 for me and it should be for businesses and municipalities. We need to be able to adapt, change, course correct, and admit when we were wrong so we can make things right. We should be able to do so as new information becomes available. We have to be willing to take things in stride and do the best we can for each other.

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**17. What do you believe are the greatest challenges the City faces over the next ten years and how would you address them? (100 words or less)**

Merriam is land locked and we will always struggle on how to grow as a community with out being able to expand our boarders. We will always be a part of a larger community, the metro-area, that we will have limited ability to influence.

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**18. Why are you seeking this public office? (100 words or less)**

I want to be able to represent my neighbors and their concerns for our community. I feel like I have a lot of good ideas for the city, but I can't represent just myself, or my family, or my block, or even just my ward, my duty as a council member is to represent everyone's needs in Merriam.

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**19. What do you believe makes you uniquely qualified to serve in this position and most distinguishes you from your opponent(s) in this race? (100 words or less)**

I think that my experience as an architect makes me a great problem solver. We work within a wide range of constraints to meet everyone's needs to the best ability possible. We work within tight budgets and have to adapt quickly to changes and constraints as they arise.

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